F84/990

background notes

France

United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs

November 1990

Official Name:
French Republic

PROFILE

Geography

Area: 551,670 sq. km. (220,668 sq. mi.); largest West European country, about four-fifths the size of Texas. **Cities**: *Capital*—Paris. *Other cities*—Marseille, Lyon, Toulouse, Strasbourg, Nice, Bordeaux. **Terrain**: Varied. **Climate**: Temperate; similar to that of the eastern US.

People

Nationality: *Noun*—Frenchman(men). *Adjective*—French. **Population**: (1989 est.): 56 million. **Annual growth rate** (1989 est.): 0.5%. **Ethnic groups**: Celtic and Latin with Teutonic, Slavic, North African, Indochinese, and Basque minorities. **Religion**: Roman Catholic 90%. **Language**: French. **Education**: *Years compulsory*—10. *Literacy*—99%. **Health**: *Infant mortality rate*—8.2/1,000. **Work force** (24 million, 1987): *Agriculture*—8%. *Industry and commerce*—45%. *Services*—47%. **Unemployment rate** (1989 est.): 9.4%.

Government

Type: Republic. **Constitution**: September 28, 1958.

Branches: *Executive*—president (chief of state); prime minister (head of government). *Legislative*—bicameral parliament (577-member National Assembly, 319-member Senate). *Judicial*—Court of Cassation (civil and criminal law), Council of State (administrative court), Constitutional Council (constitutional law).

Subdivisions: 22 administrative regions containing 96 departments (metropolitan France). Five overseas departments (Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana and Reunion); five overseas territories (New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna Islands, and French Southern and Antarctic Territories); and two special status territories (Mayotte and St. Pierre and Miquelon).

Political parties: Socialist Party (PS), Rally for the Republic (RPR—Gaullists/Conservatives), Union for French Democracy (UDF—Center-Right), Parti Republicain (PR—center right), Communist Party (PCF), National Front (FN), various minor parties. **Suffrage**: Universal over 18.

Defense (1987): 16.1% of central government budget.

Flag: Three vertical stripes of blue, white, and red.

Economy

GDP (1989 est.): $970 billion. **Avg. annual growth rate** (1989 est.): 4.5%. **Per capita GDP** (1989 est.): $17,320. **Avg. inflation rate** (1989 est.): 3.5%.

Natural resources: Coal, iron ore, bauxite, fish, forests.

Agriculture: *Products*—beef, dairy products, cereals, sugar beets, potatoes, wine grapes.

Industry: *Types*—steel, machinery, textiles and clothing, chemicals, food processing, aircraft, electronics, transportation.

Trade (1989 est.): *Exports*—(f.o.b.) $160 billion: chemicals, electronics, automobiles, automobile spare parts, machinery, aircraft, foodstuffs. *Imports*—(f.o.b.) $167.8 billion: crude petroleum, electronics, machinery, chemicals, automobiles, automobile spare parts. *Partners*—FRG, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, US, UK, Netherlands, Japan.

Official exchange rate (1989 avg.): *f*5.7 =$ 1.

Membership in International Organizations

UN and most of its specialized and related agencies, including the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Labor Organization (ILO), and the World Health Organization (WHO); NATO; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); Western European Union; European Community (EC); INTELSAT.

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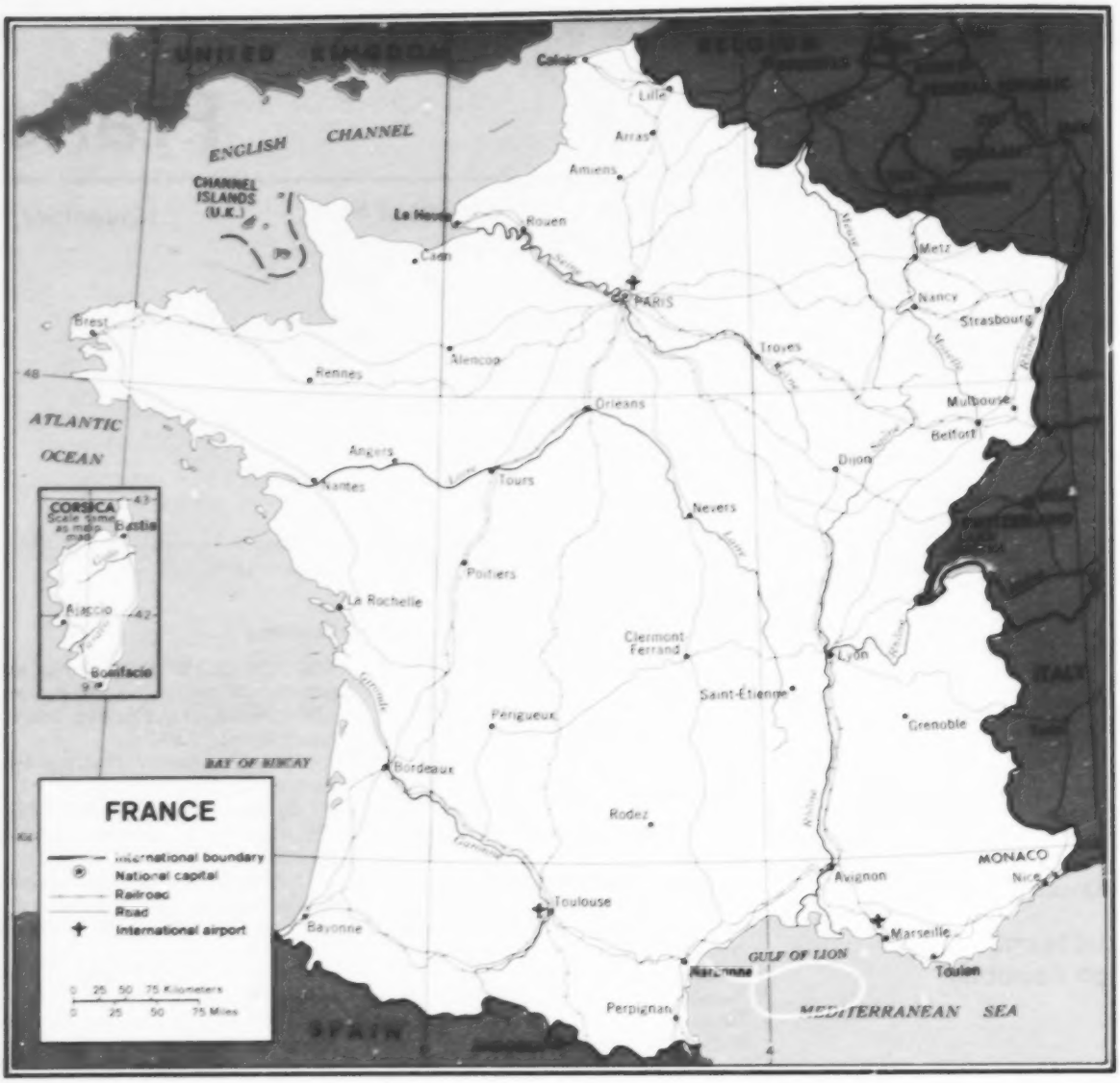

PEOPLE

Since prehistoric times, France has been a crossroads of trade, travel, and invasion. Three basic European stocks—Celtic, Latin, and Teutonic (Frankish)—have blended over the centuries to make up its present population.

France's birth rate was among the highest in Europe from 1945 until the late 1960s, when it began to decline. The annual net increase of births over deaths stood at 250,000–350,000 until 1974. Because of this growth and immigration, the population increased from 41 million in 1946 to 53 million in 1977. In the past few years, the birth rate has continued to fall but remains higher than that of most other West European countries.

Traditionally, France has had a high level of immigration. Most resident aliens are southern Europeans (52% of total) and North Africans (26% of total), the two principal nationalities being Portuguese and Algerian.

About 90% of the people are Roman Catholic, less than 2% are Protestant, and about 1% are Jewish. More than 1 million Muslims immigrated in the 1960s and early 1970s from North Africa, especially Algeria.

Education is free beginning at age 2 and mandatory between ages 6 and 16. The public education system is highly centralized, with a budget totaling about 3.5% of gross domestic product (GDP). Private education is primarily Roman Catholic. Higher education in France, which began with the founding of the University of Paris in 1150, enrolls about 1 million students in 69 universities in continental France and an estimated additional 158,000 in special schools, such as the *Grandes Ecoles*, technical colleges, and vocational training institutions.

The French language derives from the vernacular Latin spoken by the Romans in Gaul, although it includes many Celtic and Germanic words. French has been an international language for centuries and is a common second language throughout the world. It is one of five official languages at the United Nations. In Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the West Indies, French has been a unifying factor, particularly in those countries where it serves as the only common language among a variety of indigenous languages and dialects.

Cultural Achievements

Since the time of the Roman Empire, France's achievements in literature, the arts, and science have profoundly influenced Western culture. In architecture, the Romanesque basilicas, soaring Gothic cathedrals, the formal gardens of Versailles, the imperial design of Parisian boulevards and squares, and the modern designs of masters like Le Corbusier attest to France's continuing influence.

French painting has spanned the centuries in greatness and includes such names as Watteau (1684–1721), who depicted the polished, elegant society of his time; David (1748–1825), the neoclassical artist of the Revolution and Empire; Delacroix (1798–1863) the romantic; naturalists and realists Corot (1796–1875), Millet (1814–75), and Courbet (1819–77), who painted realistic landscapes and scenes from rural life; the impressionists, including Monet (1840–1926) and Renoir (1841–1919), who explored light on canvas; and Cezanne (1839–1906), whose ideas about the treatment of space and dimension are at the base of 20th-century modern art. Other famous artists, such as Van Gogh and Picasso, were drawn to France from other countries.

In music, Berlioz (1803–69) and Saint-Saens (1835–1921) in the romantic period were followed by Debussy (1862-1918) and Faure (1845–1924), who were inspired by the impressionist movement in painting. In the 19th century, Bizet (1838–75) wrote the opera *Carmen*, and Gounod (1818–93) wrote *Faust* and *Romeo et Juliette*. Although born in Poland, Chopin (1810–49) spent his adult life in Paris.

France has played a leading role in the advancement of science. Descartes (1596–1650) contributed to mathematics and to the modern scientific method; Lavoisier (1743–94) laid the fundamentals of modern chemistry and physics; Becquerel (1854–1912) and the Curies jointly discovered radium and the principle of radioactivity; and Pasteur (1822–95) developed theories of germs and vaccinations. Several important French inventors were Daguerre (1789–1851), a theatrical scenery painter who invented the daguerrotype, an early photograph; Braille (1809–52), a blind teacher of the blind, after whom the system of raised lettering enabling the blind to read is named; and Bertillon (1853–1914), an anthropologist and criminologist who organized the fingerprint system of identification. French scientists have won a number of Nobel Prizes during the 20th century.

French literature is renowned from the medieval romances of Marie de France and Chretien de Troyes and the poetry in Old French of Francois Villon to the 20th century novelists Colette, Proust, Sartre, and Camus. Over the intervening centuries, a number of renowned artists flourished that included the Renaissance writers Rabelais (fiction), Ronsard (poetry), and Montaigne (essays); the 17th century classical dramatists Corneille, Racine, and Moliere; the 18th century philosophers Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau; the romantics Germain de Stael, Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas (father and son), and Alphonse de Lamartine; 19th century novelists Stendhal, George Sand, and Balzac; realist Flaubert; naturalists Zola and Baudelaire; and 19th century poets Verlaine, Rimbaud, and Valery.

French filmmakers from Jean Renoir to Francois Truffaut have won acclaim in recent decades.

HISTORY

France was one of the earliest countries to progress from feudalism into the era of the nation-state. Its monarchs surrounded themselves with capable ministers, and French armies were among the most innovative, disciplined, and professional of their day. During the reign of Louis XIV (1643–1715), France was the preeminent power in Europe. But overly ambitious projects

Travel Notes

Customs: There is no visa requirement for US citizens who travel to France for short-term visits of 90 days or less for purposes of business or pleasure. Travelers who are planning to work, study, or stay longer than 90 days will still need a visa. No vaccination is required. Travelers must declare goods carried in hand or in baggage and pass through customs inspection.

Clothing: Clothing needs are similar to those in Washington, DC.

Health: No special precautions are needed. Standards of medical care are usually acceptable. The American Hospital of Paris is located at 63 Boulevard Victor-Hugo, 9200 Neuilly sur Seine (tel. 4747-5300).

Telecommunications: Domestic and international telephone, telegraph, and cable communications are good. Paris is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time.

Transportation: Rail and bus systems offer good transportation in all large French cities. Paris has an excellent subway system and local rail services. Taxis are available at moderate rates in all cities. Good air and railway service is available to all parts of France and other European capitals.

Principal Government Officials

President—Francois Mitterrand
President of the Senate—Alain Poher
President of the National Assembly—Laurent Fabius
Prime Minister—Michel Rocard
Minister of State for Education and Sports—Lionel Jospin
Minister of State for Economy, Finance, and the Budget—Pierre Beregovoy
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs—Roland Dumas
Minister of Justice—Henri Nallet
Minister of Defense—Jean-Pierre Chevenement
Minister of Interior—Pierre Joxe
Minister of Culture, Communication, Major Projects—Jack Lang
Ambassador to the United States—Jacques Andreani
Ambassador to the United Nations—Pierre-Louis Blanc

France maintains an embassy in the United States at 4101 Reservoir Road, NW, Washington, DC 20007, (202) 944-6000. Consulates are located at Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, San Francisco, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

and military campaigns of Louis and his successors led to chronic financial problems in the 18th century. Deteriorating economic conditions and popular resentment against the complicated system of privileges granted the nobility and clerics were among the principal causes of the French Revolution (1789–94).

Although the revolutionaries advocated republican and egalitarian principles of government, France reverted to forms of absolute rule or constitutional monarchy four times—the Empire of Napoleon, the Restoration of Louis XVIII, the reign of Louis-Philippe, and the Second Empire of Napoleon III. After the Franco-Prussian War (1870), the Third Republic was established and lasted until the military defeat of 1940.

World War I brought great losses of troops and materiel. In the 1920s, France established an elaborate system of border defenses (the Maginot Line) and alliances to offset resurgent German strength. France was defeated, however, and occupied in 1940. Following 4 years of occupation and strife, Allied forces liberated France in 1944. The nation emerged exhausted from World War II and faced a series of new problems.

After a short period of provisional government, initially led by Gen. Charles de Gaulle, the Fourth Republic was established under a new constitution with a parliamentary form of government controlled by a series of coalitions. The mixed nature of the coalitions and the lack of agreement on measures for dealing with Indochina and Algeria caused successive cabinet crises and changes of government. The government structure finally collapsed over the Algerian question on May 13, 1958. A threatened coup led parliament to call on General de Gaulle to head the government and prevent civil war. He became prime minister in June 1958 (at the beginning of the Fifth Republic) and was elected president in December.

On December 5, 1965, for the first time in the 20th century, the French people went to the polls to elect a president by direct ballot. General de Gaulle defeated Francois Mitterrand with 55% of the vote.

In April 1969, President de Gaulle's government conducted a national referendum on the creation of 21 regions with limited political powers. The government's proposals were defeated (48% in favor, 52% opposed), and President de Gaulle resigned. Following de Gaulle were Gaullist Georges Pompidou (1969–1974), Independent Republican Valery Giscard d'Estaing (1974–1981), and Socialist Francois Mitterand (1981–present).

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

The constitution of the Fifth Republic was approved by public referendum on September 28, 1958. It greatly strengthened the authority of the executive in relation to parliament. Under the constitution, the president is elected directly for a 7-year term. Presidential arbitration assures regular functioning of the public powers and the continuity of the state. The president names the prime minister, presides over the cabinet, commands the armed forces, and concludes treaties. The president may submit questions to a national referendum and can dissolve the National Assembly. In certain emergency situations, the president may assume full powers. The president is thus the dominant element in the constitutional system.

Parliament meets in regular session twice annually for a maximum of 3 months on each occasion. Special sessions are common. Although parliamentary powers are diminished from those existing under the Fourth Republic, the National Assembly can still cause a government to fall if an absolute majority of the total assembly membership votes to censure.

The National Assembly is the principal legislative body. Its deputies are directly elected to 5-year terms, and all seats are voted on in each election. Senators are chosen by an electoral college for 9-year terms, and one-third of the Senate is renewed every 3 years. The Senate's legislative powers are limited; the National Assembly has the last word in the event of a disagreement between the two houses. The government has a strong influence in shaping the agenda of parliament. The government also can link its life to any legislative text, and unless a motion of censure is introduced and voted, the text is considered adopted without a vote.

The most distinctive feature of the French judicial system is that it is divided into two categories—a regular court system and a court system that deals specifically with legal problems of the French administration and its relation to the French citizen. The Constitutional Council rules on constitutional questions.

Traditionally, decisionmaking in France has been highly centralized, with each of France's departments headed by a prefect appointed by the central government. In 1982, the national government passed legislation to decentralize authority by giving a wide range of administrative and fiscal powers to local elected officials. In March 1986, regional councils were directly elected for the first time.

In the National Assembly (577 seats), the Socialists and their allies currently hold 271 seats; the Communists, 26. The center-right opposition consists of the neo-Gaullist RPR (132 seats), the UDF coalition (90 seats), and the UDC (Centrists—41 seats). Sixteen members of the National Assembly have no parliamentary group affiliation. The far-right National Front currently has one deputy. The cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Rocard, is composed of 47 ministers, minister-delegates, and secretaries of state.

ECONOMY

France is the fourth largest Western industrialized economy. Its $970-billion GDP in 1989 was about one-fifth that of the United States. It has substantial agricultural resources, a diversified modern industrial system, and a highly skilled labor force.

For the past 2 years, France has enjoyed an investment and export boom, enabling its economy to grow at an average rate of 4%. Keeping inflation under control has strengthened France's competitiveness abroad. Government policy—stressing investment promotion and maintenance of fiscal and monetary discipline—seeks to ensure the franc's stability and strength within the European monetary system.

Areas of concern exist, however, especially unemployment (9.4% in 1989) and a moderate but stubborn trade deficit. Over the last 2 years, 500,000 new jobs have been created, and although inflation in 1989 was 3.5%, this is still below the average in the European Community.

France's highly developed and diversified industrial enterprises generate about one-third of the GDP and employ about one-third of the work force. This distribution is similar to that of other highly industrialized nations. The government continues to exert considerable control over the industrial sector both through planning and regulatory activities and through direct state ownership.

The most important areas of industrial production include steel and related products, aluminum, chemicals, and mechanical and electrical goods. France has been notably successful in developing dynamic telecommunications, aerospace, and weapons sectors. With virtually no domestic oil production, France has banked heavily on development of nuclear power, which now produces about 80% of the country's electrical energy. Nuclear waste is stored onsite at reprocessing facilities, although there is currently a 1-year moratorium on site work. Underground storage is under study.

Compared to the European Community's (EC) average of less than 50%, only 10%-12% of the French work force is unionized. Several competing union confederations include the largest, oldest, and most powerful union—the communist-dominated General Labor Confederation, the Workers' Force, and the French Democratic Confederation of Labor.

Trade

France is the second largest trading nation in Western Europe (after the Federal Republic of Germany). Trade with the EC countries accounts for 60% of total French trade.

US exports to France have grown rapidly in recent years. Two-way trade in 1989 totaled nearly $25 billion. US electronic production and testing

The G-7 Economic Summit

President Bush hosted the 16th annual G-7 summit for the leaders of the major industrialized democracies—Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States—and the president of the European Community, in Houston, Texas, July 9-11.

The summit was held against the backdrop of movement toward democracy and freer markets in many parts of the world, including elections in Eastern Europe and Nicaragua, increasing momentum toward German unification, and political reforms in the Soviet Union. The summit leaders agreed on most international economic and political issues, but intense discussions were needed on agricultural subsidies in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, economic assistance to the Soviet Union, and global warming before consensus could be reached.

Economic Accomplishments

- Agreement on progressive reductions in internal and external support and protection of agriculture and on a framework for conducting agricultural negotiations in order to conclude the Uruguay Round by December 1990.
- Request to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to undertake a study of the Soviet economy, to make recommendations, and to establish the criteria under which Western economic assistance could effectively support Soviet reforms by the end of 1990.
- Support for aid to Central and Eastern European nations that are firmly committed to political and economic reform, including freer markets, and encouragement of foreign private investment in those countries and improved markets for their exports by means of trade and investment agreements.
- Pledge to begin negotiations, to be completed by 1992, on a global forest convention to protect the world's forests.

Political Accomplishments

- Promotion of democracy throughout the world by assisting in the drafting of laws, advising in fostering independent media, establishing training programs, and expanding exchange programs.
- Endorsement of the maintenance of an effective international nuclear nonproliferation system, including adoption of safeguards and nuclear export control measures, and support for a complete ban on chemical weapons.

equipment, electronic components, telecommunications, computers and peripherals, analytical and scientific instrumentation, medical instruments and supplies, broadcasting equipment, and film programming and franchising are particularly attractive to French importers. Principal French exports to the United States are iron and steel, machinery and electrical equipment, aircraft, beverages, and chemicals.

Agriculture

A favorable climate, large tracts of fertile land, and the application of modern technology have combined to make France the leading agricultural producer in Western Europe. The EC's common agricultural policy also has created a large, easily accessible market for French products. France is one of the world's leading producers and exporters of dairy products, wheat, and wine. Although more land is devoted to pasture and grain, some of France's best land is planted in wine grapes in strictly controlled, small regions. Of France's total land area, 56% is under cultivation.

Balance of Payments

In 1988 and 1989, France's trade and current account deficit grew slowly, while exports, pulled along by stronger demand overseas, grew more rapidly. By 1989, the trade deficit was $10.5 billion (on a balance of payments basis), while the current account deficit was $3.7 billion—0.4% of GDP, a figure that is easily financed and that remains small by international standards. French policymakers are nonetheless quite concerned with trade performance in industrial goods where a surplus several years ago had turned, by 1989, to a $13 billion deficit.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

A charter member of the United Nations, France holds one of the permanent seats in the Security Council and is a member of most of its specialized and related agencies.

Europe: France is a leader in Western Europe because of its size, location, strong economy, membership in European organizations, strong military posture, and energetic diplomacy. France generally has worked to strengthen the global economic and political influence of the European Community, attaches great importance to its role in common European defense, and views Franco-German cooperation as the foundation of efforts to enhance European security. France is a firm supporter of the CSCE process and other efforts at regional cooperation.

Middle East: France supports Israel's right to exist and the implementation of Palestinians' political rights. It believes in the necessity of a comprehensive Middle Eastern peace settlement that would include Israel's withdrawal from all occupied territories and the establishment of a Palestinian homeland. It believes this can best be accomplished through an international peace conference and supports direct involvement of the Palestine Liberation Organization. France has been actively engaged in promoting a political settlement and national reconciliation in Lebanon. In framing its policy in the Middle East, France seeks to ensure oil supplies and access to markets. France was among the first nations to oppose Iraqi aggression in Kuwait and sent a large military force into the region. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, France supported the resolutions calling for Iraq's withdrawal.

Africa: France plays a significant role in Africa, especially in its former colonies, through extensive aid programs, commercial activities, military agreements, and cultural leadership. Key advisory positions are staffed by French nationals in many African countries. In those former colonies where the French presence remains important, France contributes to political, military, and social stability. France sent a large military force to Chad in August 1983 to assist the government of Chad resist an invasion by Libyan and Chadian rebel forces. In early 1986, France again assisted the Chadian government in resisting armed incursions by Libyan-backed rebels.

Despite reluctance to support Chadian President Hussein Habre's reconquest of the Aozou Strip, France remains committed to supporting Chadian territorial integrity.

Asia: France has extensive commercial relations with Asian countries, including Japan, Korea, Indonesia, and China. However, Japanese competition in automobiles, electronics, and machine tools is a major economic problem. France has

Principal US Officials

Ambassador—Walter J.P. Curley
Deputy Chief of Mission—Mark C. Lissfelt
Minister Counselor for Political Affairs—Miles S. Pendleton
Minister Counselor for Economic Affairs—Janice F. Bay
Financial Attache—T. Whittier Wharthin
Minister Counselor for Commercial Affairs—Melvin W. Searls
Counselor for Labor Affairs—John J. Muth
Counselor for Scientific and Technological Affairs—Michael Michaud
Minister Counselor for Consular Affairs—Diane Dillard
Minister Counselor for Administrative Affairs—Bruce W. Clark
Minister Counselor for Public Affairs—Robert J. Korengold
Defense Attache—Rear Adm. Philip Dur, USN

Consular Posts
Consul General, Marseille—R. Susan Wood
Consul General, Bordeaux—Judith M. Heimann
Consul General, Martinique—Raymond G. Robinson
Consul General, Lyon—Ann L. Stanford
Consul General, Strasbourg—Ints Silins

The US Embassy in France is located at 2 Avenue Gabriel, Paris 8 (tel. 4296-1202). The United States also is represented in Paris by its mission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

A village along the Seine. (© National Geographic Society)

taken a leading role in efforts to achieve a settlement to the Cambodian conflict and is seeking to broaden its influence with Vietnam and Laos. Private French groups play a leading role in humanitarian assistance to the Afghanistan resistance.

Latin America: France and the United States agree on the need for strengthening democratic institutions in Latin America, despite differences on certain issues. There are large Latin American exile communities in France, notably from Argentina and Chile. French economic interests in the region are growing but remain only a small portion of its worldwide economic activities.

DEFENSE

France is a charter signatory to the North Atlantic Treaty and is a member of the North Atlantic Council and its subordinate institutions. Since 1966, it has not participated in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) integrated military structure, although it remains a member of some alliance military or quasi-military bodies. In addition, France maintains liaison missions with the major NATO commands.

French military doctrine is based on the concepts of national independence, nuclear deterrence, and military sufficiency. Its armed forces are subject to national command, and any decision to cooperate with its allies is subject to the sovereign decision of the French president.

France maintains an army corps in Germany and one corps stationed in France near its eastern and northern borders. France also has reorganized its army. Five divisions were regrouped into a rapid action force designed to intervene rapidly in a conflict in Europe or overseas if necessary. Its navy is the largest in Western Europe, and its air force has about 450 aircraft in operational units. France is linked to its European neighbors through the 1948 Treaty of Brussels and the 1954 Paris accords. It is an active member of the Western European Union and has a close bilateral security relationship with Germany based on the 1963 Elysee Treaty.

France maintains a strategic nuclear triad of manned bombers, land-based intermediate-range ballistic missiles, and nuclear-powered ballistic

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and Secretary Baker at a meeting in Paris, July 1990.

missile submarines (SSBNs). It is modernizing its nuclear forces, and a seventh SSBN will be launched in the late 1990s.

France participates in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva (CCD), the Conference on Security- and Confidence-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE), and the conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations in Vienna. France is not a signatory to the Limited Test Ban Treaty and conducts nuclear testing underground at its South Pacific test site. France has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but does follow its terms. The French government has endorsed the Strategic Arms Limitation II Treaty. The French strongly support the process of US-Soviet nuclear arms control and the ABM (anti-ballistic missile) Treaty, but they object to inclusion of any French nuclear forces in these negotiations and are wary of any moves toward the denuclearization of Europe. France does not wish to take part in negotiations on short-range nuclear forces (SNF), which are to begin soon.

US-FRENCH RELATIONS

Relations between the United States and France are active and cordial. President Mitterrand has met with President Bush on numerous occasions. Bilateral contact at the cabinet level is frequent.

France and the United States are allies who share common values and have parallel policies on most political, economic, and security issues. Differences are discussed frankly when they develop and have not been allowed to impair the pattern of close cooperation that characterizes relations between the two countries. ■

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